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VoIP SOLUTIONS  
FOCUS ON DISABILITY ACCESS ISSUES

MAY 25 2004

SUMMIT

Federal Communications Commission  
Office of the Secretary

FRIDAY  
MAY 7, 2004

The Summit met in the Commission Meeting Room at FCC Headquarters, 445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W., Washington, D.C., at 9:00 a.m., Robert Pepper, Chief of Policy Development, FCC, presiding.

COMMISSIONERS

MICHAEL POWELL	Chairman
KATHLEEN Q. ABERNATHY	Commissioner
JONATHAN ADELSTEIN	Commissioner
MICHAEL COPPS	Commissioner

PARTICIPANTS

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CARY BARBIB	Galludet TAP
BRENDA BATTAT	Self Help for the Hard of Hearing
ED BOSSON	Texas Public Utilities Commission
JEFF CARLISLE	FCC, Co-Director Internet Policy Working Group
GUNNAR HELLSTROM	Omnitor
PAUL E. JONES	Cisco
PAUL MICHAELIS	Avaya
ROBERT PEPPER	FCC, Chief of Policy Development
HAROLD SALTERS	T-Mobile
PAUL SCHROEDER	American Foundation for the Blind
K. DANE SNOWDEN	FCC, Chief, Consumer & Government Affairs Bureau
CLAUDE STOUT	Telecommunications for the Deaf, Inc.
JIM TOBIAS	Inclusive Technologies
GREGG VANDERHEIDEN	Trace Research and Development Center
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## A-G-E-N-D-A

OPENING REMARKS .....	3
PANEL 1 .....	16
PANEL 2 .....	57
PANEL 3 .....	110
CLOSING REMARKS .....	158

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1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 9:18 a.m.

3 OPENING REMARKS

4 DR. PEPPER: Good morning. I'll give people  
5 a chance to get settled. Good morning, my name is  
6 Robert Pepper. I am chief of policy development here  
7 at the FCC, and co-chair with Jeff Carlisle, who you  
8 will meet in a little while.

9 We are co-chairs of the Internet Policy  
10 Working Group. I want to welcome everybody to the  
11 second of our Voice Over IP Solutions Summits. We had  
12 one on E911 issues.

13 And we have today's meeting on -- we are  
14 focusing on disability access issues. And we are very  
15 pleased that everybody is here. And we are  
16 particularly pleased that so many people have come  
17 from out of town, as well as people who are watching  
18 us on the internet, since we are streaming today's  
19 solution summit on the internet.

20 It is being webcast, and it will be archived  
21 on our website so you will be able look at it later  
22 on. Back in December, on December first, the  
23 Commission had a public forum on Voice Over IP issues.

24 And, at that time, there was broad consensus  
25 that, well, Voice Over IP is a very exciting new

1 technology with all kinds of new possibilities. That  
2 leads to all kinds of new competitive possibilities  
3 and consumer benefits, and therefore, traditional  
4 economic regulation might not be appropriate.

5 That there were several very important  
6 enduring public policies, social policies, that do not  
7 change, and that, in fact, Voice Over IP services need  
8 to consider these very important social policies.

9 And among those we identified, and the  
10 Commissioners identified, and the panelist identified  
11 affordable phone service, universal service, the  
12 ability for first responders with 911 to have access,  
13 and for consumers to have access to 911, the ability  
14 for Law Enforcement to have access to the information  
15 that they need, and also, very importantly, that  
16 people with disabilities have access to the  
17 communications networks and services.

18 And so, at that time, Chairman Powell called  
19 for a series of what we called Solutions Summits. And  
20 it's important, of course, you know, what you call  
21 things.

22 And the reason we call them Solutions  
23 Summits is Summits because we want senior people in  
24 from industry from, in this case, the disabilities  
25 community, from the academic world, senior people who

1 have been thinking about these issues to come to the  
2 Commission and talk to us, and talk to each other  
3 about the issues that are raised when we move into an  
4 IP enabled world.

5 And we focused on the word Solutions because  
6 that's exactly what we're looking towards, not just oh  
7 here are problems, or here are issues, or here are  
8 questions, but rather we should begin identifying what  
9 the questions are, and then beginning to identify  
10 possible solutions.

11 So it's a constructive positive solutions  
12 oriented discussion that we are trying to have today.  
13 And, having spoken to people, I think this is what we  
14 are going to have.

15 Just a few house-keeping things, and then I  
16 will introduce some of our distinguished opening  
17 speakers, my bosses, the Commissioners. First, as I  
18 mentioned, the event today will be webcast.

19 Second, it will be archived on the webpage  
20 we have on FCC, [www.fcc.gov/ipwg](http://www.fcc.gov/ipwg), that's for IP  
21 working group. It's ipwg. And on that webpage you  
22 will be able to access not only today's event, but  
23 also the Solutions Summit we had E911.

24 Today's presentation also will become part  
25 of the record in the Commission's proceeding on IP

1 enabled services. There will be a transcript of  
2 today's proceeding that will be made part of that  
3 record.

4 What we will do is have time for questions  
5 after each panel. But if you could hold your  
6 questions until the panelists are finished, and then  
7 we will have all of the questions together for the  
8 panelists and discussion.

9 We also would appreciate that everybody use  
10 a microphone, since we are webcasting. And so the  
11 only way that the people out there in cyber-land will  
12 be able to hear the questions is if you come to the  
13 microphone.

14 We have two mics here for people. Please  
15 identify yourself before speaking. And, since we have  
16 signing and closed captioning, if people could speak  
17 very deliberately and clearly, so it makes it easier  
18 both for the people doing closed captioning, as well  
19 as the people doing the signing.

20 With that, I would like to introduce two of  
21 our Commissioner. All of our Commissioners and the  
22 Chairman will be here during the day. Should we start  
23 with Commissioner Abernathy to make some opening  
24 remarks? So, Commissioner Abernathy.

25 COMMISSIONER ABERNATHY: Good morning,

1 everyone. It is a gorgeous day, and I appreciate that  
2 you have all decided to come inside anyway to help us  
3 as we address a lot of these issues.

4 This is an extremely wonderful time in our  
5 society when it comes to what technology can do for  
6 people who have physical restrictions of different  
7 kinds.

8 And so, what I've done over the past three  
9 years is visited with a number of you to hear about  
10 what some of the frustration can be when these new  
11 technologies unfold, and somehow we don't pay adequate  
12 attention to how they can really change lives.

13 The beauty of broadband, as I've said before  
14 we even talked about with the disabilities community,  
15 is it's going to change the way people in rural parts  
16 of the country can educate their children.

17 You have access to professors that aren't  
18 available out there on subjects that previously  
19 couldn't be taught. It's going to change the way we  
20 do health and tele-medicine.

21 It gives access to wonderful ways of  
22 treating illnesses that, again, were previously  
23 unavailable. And today we are focusing on what's it  
24 going to mean for people with other kinds of physical  
25 challenges?

1           And let's make sure that it's going to  
2 deliver as much promise to all of those people, as  
3 well as to people in rural American, and people in  
4 urban areas.

5           So, I'm very, very pleased to be here. I  
6 have a quick story, because it shows how much our  
7 society really is changing today. And it's about my  
8 daughter, because everything is about my daughter.

9           And so I came home last night and there was  
10 a form she had to fill out for school next year. And  
11 it said what language do you want to take next year?  
12 And the choice was French and Spanish.

13           So I asked her which one she wanted to take.  
14 And she said I don't want to take either one. I want  
15 to take sign language. And I said, well, that's  
16 wonderful, that you want to take sign language.

17           But you're supposed to also take French or  
18 Spanish. And she said, well, it's a foreign language,  
19 mom, it's a different language, can't I take sign  
20 language.

21           So, it turns out her babysitter has been  
22 teaching sign language, and she really likes. So we  
23 are going to get a class in sign language too. In  
24 addition, she will also of course take a foreign  
25 language.



1           But what it means is that there's just a  
2 different way of looking at the world. And that means  
3 that as we approach these new technologies we have to  
4 make sure that we are presenting them in a way that  
5 all of these benefits will be made available to as  
6 many consumers as possible.

7           So, what I'm pleased, is that as many of you  
8 are here today to help us with these challenges. I  
9 think, as Dr. Pepper pointed out, we're not talking  
10 about the same old traditional economic regulation,  
11 because that's not really as much of an issue when we  
12 talk about competitive new services.

13           But what we are talking about, is what are  
14 the social obligations, the important policy  
15 obligations that are not market-driven. So they won't  
16 happen without our involvement.

17           And that's what this Solutions Summit is  
18 about, how can we deliver those benefits to all  
19 Americans? And we look forward to hearing from all of  
20 you.

21           I appreciate your time and attention to this  
22 issue. Rest assured, I will continue meeting with all  
23 of you through this next year, again, so we can  
24 continue to think about, and talk about how we can  
25 make sure that we're on the right track.

1           So thank you very much, and have a great  
2 day.

3           DR. PEPPER:       Thank you, Commissioner  
4 Abernathy. Commissioner Adelstein?

5           COMMISSIONER ALDESTEIN:   Thank you, Dr.  
6 Pepper, and I thank all of you for being here. I  
7 would also like commend Dane Snowden and the staff of  
8 the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau that put  
9 this excellent panel together.

10           We have an outstanding group of panelist.  
11 And we really appreciate your taking the time to be  
12 here and to share your expertise, and all of you, the  
13 participants, that took time out of your busy  
14 schedules and, as Commissioner Abernathy noted, out of  
15 this beautiful day, to join us here this morning.

16           And I'd also like to take a moment to thank  
17 the Chairman for doing this. He was the one whose  
18 initiative set up this series of hearings. I really  
19 think it's important that he has recognized how  
20 critical this issue is to the future of internet  
21 enabled services are really put the priority on it  
22 that resulted in this event today, which can set for  
23 us a real agenda that we need to follow to make sure  
24 that everyone in this country can benefit from the  
25 amazing new services and functionalities that can come

1 with internet enables services like this.

2 I used to work on issues regarding Americas  
3 With Disabilities when I worked on Capitol Hill for  
4 about 15 years. And it was always one of the most  
5 rewarding things I worked with because I was able to  
6 work with people who had ideas about charting their  
7 own future and just wanted the government to be a  
8 partner in that.

9 And that's what we're doing today. I was  
10 there when the Americans With Disabilities Act was  
11 enacted. And I always try to keep foremost in my  
12 mind, and I'm glad to see that the Commission does  
13 this as well, the issues affecting people with  
14 disabilities, and to make sure that all the  
15 technologies that are unfolding can be accessed by  
16 everyone in this country, including those with  
17 disabilities of various kinds.

18 And each kind of disability presents its own  
19 unique challenges and opportunities as we look at this  
20 technology. Voice Over Internet protocols an  
21 incredibly promising technology for people who have  
22 disabilities.

23 It can provide new opportunities to  
24 communicate more completely, both at home and in the  
25 workplace. VoIP is especially empowering because it

1 can integrate the phone and voicemail, audio  
2 conferencing, email, instant messaging, and web  
3 applications.

4           It can be converted into text and vice-  
5 versa. So, you can have the voice become text, the  
6 text become voice, depending on what a person needs.  
7 It can remove the need for TTY device, because TTY  
8 compatible calls can be made from a computer.

9           This is an incredible new era we are  
10 entering. VoIP can also empower workers with  
11 disabilities to perform their jobs better. Hearing  
12 impaired workers can read their voicemail.

13           And they can use various programs to do that  
14 in a fraction of the time it would otherwise take.  
15 People who have vision impairments can use IP enabled  
16 phones without the need of memorizer, marked buttons  
17 on the phone.

18           VoIP can also help remote parties, loved  
19 ones or professionals, people we work with, that  
20 assist in the care of people with disabilities. This  
21 technology is still developing.

22           And the potential is virtually unlimited.  
23 So we have got to make sure that we enable access to  
24 everyone in this country to these new technologies as  
25 they are rolling out.

1           And, as Commissioner Abernathy said, to make  
2   sure that as that happens that nobody falls behind.  
3   And, in particular, given the wonderful opportunities  
4   and applications for people with disabilities, it is  
5   especially important with these kinds of services that  
6   we make sure to completely exploit their potential to  
7   the fullest extent.

8           We want to think about this in terms of  
9   broadband as well. Now, you can't have these kinds of  
10   services, VoIP or internet-enabled services, unless  
11   you have broadband.

12           And so that makes us think about the need to  
13   deploy broadband at a fast and steady pace, and in an  
14   even way across the country. I think that this will  
15   move ahead the day that we have to consider when  
16   universal service will be applied to broadband.

17           The purpose of universal service is to  
18   ensure that all Americans have access to comparable  
19   services at comparable prices. The idea was that  
20   nobody would be left behind, be it people that live in  
21   rural America, people that live in high-cost areas, or  
22   those who had disabilities.

23           And so the priority of ensuring that kind of  
24   roll-out is moved up as there are new opportunities  
25   that become available to people through VoIP. And as

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1 we want to make sure that everybody has comparable  
2 services, if VoIP becomes the new standard, and  
3 becomes essential, for example, for those with  
4 disabilities, then we have to ensure that they have  
5 the broadband connections necessary so they can  
6 actually take advantage of these internet-enabled  
7 services.

8           It will make it easier to put everyone on  
9 these networks in an equal footing. So this summit is  
10 the first step in reaching those key objectives. I  
11 look forward to hearing from our expert panelist and  
12 participants.

13           We have this on closed circuit upstairs, as  
14 well as in our offices. We are going to continue to  
15 monitor this throughout the day. And I will want to  
16 continue to work with all of you to make sure that  
17 your views are heard as we debate these important  
18 issues, and as we make sure that this technology rolls  
19 out in a smooth, even, and rapid way across the  
20 country.

21           So thank you for making me a part of this.  
22 I really appreciate it. It is good to be here.

23           DR. PEPPER: Thank you Commissioner. The  
24 way we have structured this morning is into three  
25 panels and panel discussions. The first, which is

1 going to be chaired by Dane Snowden, who is chief of  
2 our Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, is going  
3 to focus on opportunities presented by IP-enabled  
4 services.

5 And Commissioner Adelstein just talked about  
6 some of these things. The second panel, which I will  
7 moderate, is going to look at challenges presented by  
8 IP enabled services.

9 So we have the benefits and potential  
10 issues. And then the third panel that Jeff Carlisle  
11 will moderate is going to focus on regulatory  
12 considerations for IP-enabled services and  
13 disabilities access.

14 Dane will moderate, I'm not sure, I think  
15 we're just going to probably sit there, except if some  
16 people have PowerPoints they may come up here to do  
17 their presentations.

18 We are going to try to make this as informal  
19 as possible. But I, by the way, want to echo  
20 Commissioner Adelstein and thank Dane, and June  
21 Taylor, and Kelly.

22 I mean, you just have a fabulous group that  
23 put this whole event together. And I said to Dane  
24 earlier, you have now set a new standard for every  
25 other bureau and office that puts on a meeting like

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1 this, because you have just done a fabulous job.

2 So thank you Dane. Thanks June, and thanks  
3 to Pam, Gregory and the whole team here. So, with  
4 that I will turn it over to Dane.

5 PANEL 1

6 MR. SNOWDEN: Thank you very much, Bob. My  
7 staff, they always make me look good, which is not  
8 necessarily an easy thing to do. And I appreciate it  
9 very much, all the hard work they have put into this  
10 summit.

11 Well, Good morning to everyone. This has  
12 been a long time coming. We are very excited to have  
13 this panel get started. I want to thank everyone for  
14 participating in today's activities.

15 And, as Commissioner Adelstein said a moment  
16 ago, when Chairman Powell made the call for a  
17 Solutions Summit, and he called for three, our goal  
18 was to do just that, find solutions.

19 And what we are here today is to hear some  
20 of the solutions that we can address as we look at the  
21 development and innovative technologies of VoIP. As  
22 Bob Pepper just mentioned, the first panel will  
23 discuss the opportunities of IP-enabled services,  
24 particularly as it applies to people with  
25 disabilities.

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